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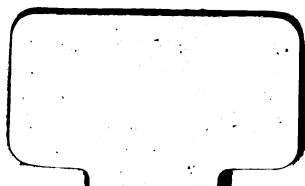


*Cluck-cluck, a Christmas story told
by grandpapa Potmouse, ed. ...*

Edward Barrington De Fonblanque



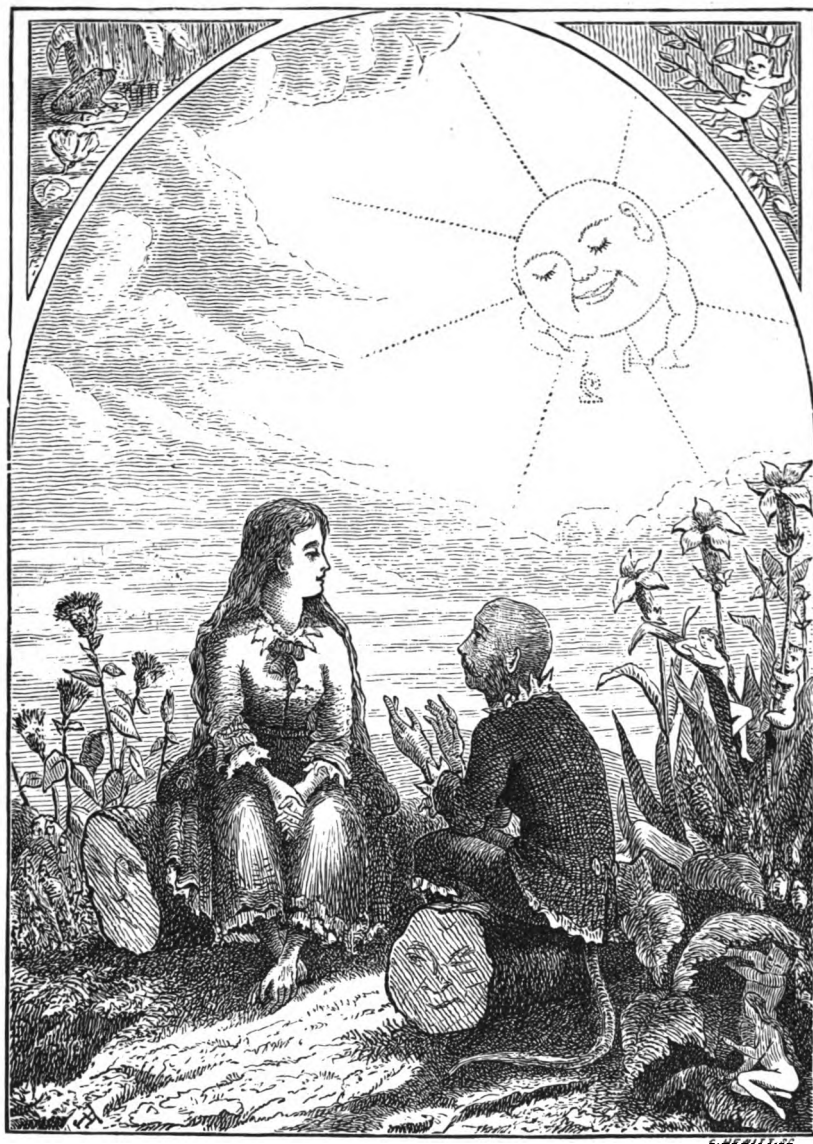
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CLUCK-CLUCK.





PRINCE BA-BOONI AND PRINCESS MUNK-EYNA.

Frontispiece, see page 19.

CLUCK - CLUCK

A CHRISTMAS STORY TOLD BY

GRANDPAPA POTMOUSE



EDITED BY EDWARD BARRINGTON DE FONBLANQUE

ILLUSTRATED BY T. W. Y.



LONDON

BASIL MONTAGU PICKERING

196 PICCADILLY W

1877

251. a. 44.

MY DEAR CHILDREN,



PROMISED to tell you a story at
Christmas, so here it is!

You need not believe every word of
it unless you like; but it is quite as true as the
stories that my Grandpapa used to tell me when I
was your age, and I believed every word of them.

So, hoping you will be pleased with "CLUCK-
CLUCK," and wishing you all a Merry Christmas,


I remain,

Your affectionate Grandpapa,

POTMOUSE.

Christmas, 1876.

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS.

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<div style="display: inline-block; width: 100px; text-align: center;">  </div> <div style="display: inline-block; vertical-align: top; margin-left: 10px;"> RINCE BA-BOONI AND PRINCESS MUNK- EYNA. <i>Frontispiece</i> A NOBLEMAN OF GRIGLAND A WORKING WOMAN SPINNING GOOSE-NURSE, PIG-BABY, AND GIRAFFE-GUARD A LADY OF FLICKLAND PRINCE BA-BOONI HUNTING THE SMOO PRINCESS MUNK-EYNA CHASING THE WHIMBREL PRINCE BA-BOONI SUFFERING FROM YNOOPS THE MEETING OF THE KINGS OF GRIGLAND AND FLICKLAND POOR DEARS! </div>	 19 6 6 7 10 13 14 29 30 42

CLUCK-CLUCK

BY

GRANDPAPA POTMOUSE.



T was a very long time ago! So long ago that the colours are quite faded, and the beautiful blue days and the bright, golden mornings, and the quiet, brown nights have all turned into a rusty gray colour, like the muzzle and paws of poor dear old Dell, whose coat was so black and glossy when he was a young dog.

It was a very long time ago! So long ago that the merry laughing voices now sound like the wind when it wails among the trees in the forest in

B

autumn ; so long ago that the sweet faces and bright eyes and rosy cheeks look pale and dim through the mist of time, like street lamps glimmering through a fog.

In that long-ago time there was no bad weather, but the sun shone all day long ; and when he was tired of shining, and went to bed, the moon got up (never a shabby half or quarter moon, but always quite full and round), and wandered about among the stars who danced in the bright heavens all the night through to the sweetest music you ever heard. And where do you think the music came from ? Why, from the flowers, who in that long-ago time had sweet voices as well as sweet smells, and used to sing the prettiest songs without ever missing a note.

And more than that : in that long-ago time the flowers had not only voices, but they had wings, and when they were tired of sitting in the grass they would get up and fly about in the air, like humming-birds, and go right up to the sky to make music for the stars to dance to.

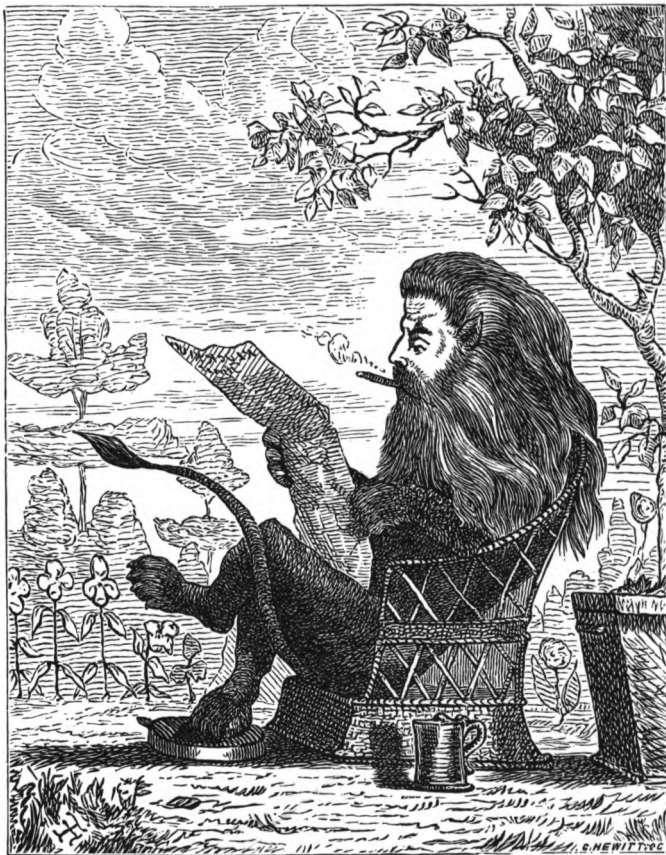
In that long-ago time tears had not been invented ; nobody was ever ill, or sorrowful, or angry ; and, what is better still, nobody ever died, to be carried away and buried under ground, leaving breaking hearts to mourn over them.

Not only did nobody ever die in those long-ago times, but nobody ever got old. From the hour they were born till they were five and twenty years old, people grew bigger and more beautiful every day ; but as soon as they were five and twenty they began to grow smaller day by day, till at last they were little babies again ; and so they went on, getting bigger and smaller for hundreds and hundreds of years. Now you see, as children kept growing older, their mammas and papas kept growing younger, so that very often children were much older than their parents, and you might see a girl of twelve dandling her little papa in her lap, or a boy of ten wheeling his little mamma in a perambulator. And as it was with people so it was with the trees, which began to bud in the spring, and to

blossom in the summer, and to bear beautiful fruit in the autumn; but there was no cruel frost to come and shrivel up the leaves; and there were no harsh winds to blow them away, leaving the poor old tree bare, and cold, and desolate; for in these long-ago times there was no winter; and as soon as the golden autumn was over, the soft blue spring came again.

Oh, it was such a happy time! and therefore it was called the CLUCK-CLUCK TIME, and there were only two countries in the whole world then, divided by a high mountain, and one was called the land of GRIG and the other was called the land of FLICK. And two such beautiful countries were never seen, for all the towns and villages were large gardens, with summer-houses and arbours, in which the people lived, and flower-beds, spread with ferns and moss, on which they slept, and splashing fountains in marble basins, in which they bathed.

Now there was an old law in the land of GRIG which forbade anybody to go to the top of the mountain and to look over the other side, and so all the



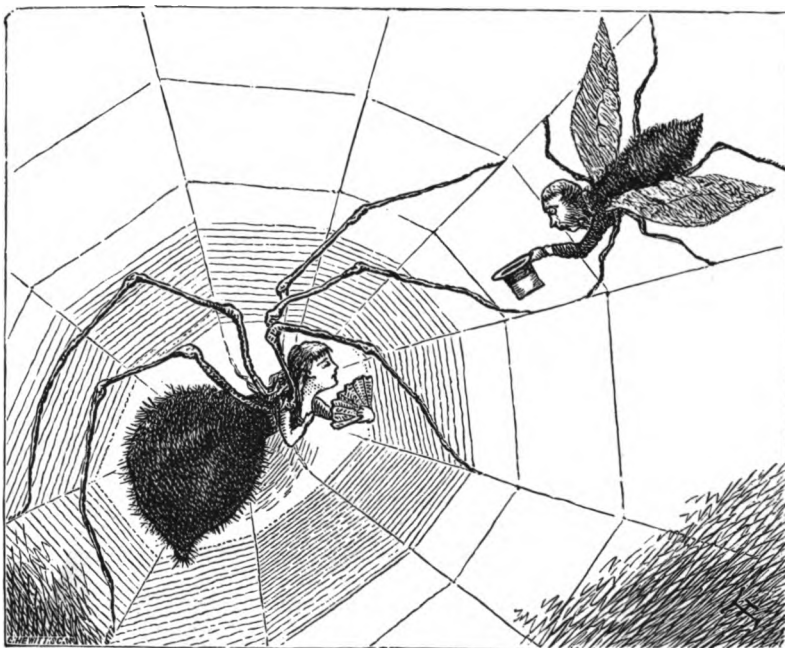
A NOBLEMAN OF GRIGLAND.

GRIGS thought that there was nothing there but a great marsh, full of ravenous Sallygaiters. And there was an old law in the land of FLICK which forbade people to go to the top of *their* mountain to see what was on the other side, and *they* thought there was nothing there but a deep pool of black water, full of Crocoducks; and so the GRIGS and the FLICKS lived on, and each believed that they were the only people in existence, and that if anything happened to them the world must come to an end.

I have told you that everything was very different in the CLUCK-CLUCK time from what it is now, so you won't be surprised to hear that the people of GRIG and the people of FLICK were not at all the same as the people of the present day. There was nothing unusual about their faces; they had eyes and noses, and chins, and mouths, just as you have; but their bodies were the bodies of animals, which were the same in the CLUCK-CLUCK time as they are now (only there were no reptiles then, such as snakes and worms, and black-beetles and earwigs); but some of

the animals were called by different names from what we call them now, and there were also some which exist no longer, and of which we have never discovered any remains, except the petrified tips of their tails.

The King and Queen of GRIGLAND and FLICKLAND had the figures of large monkeys, and they always walked upright on their hind legs. The nobles were lions, and tigers, and bears, and stags, who never did any work, but had ever so many of the smaller animals to hunt for them, and to wait upon them; and they also walked upright on their hind legs, except when they sat down, or in the presence of royalty, when they went on all fours. The gentry and the professional people were horses and dogs, and wolves, and foxes, and other such animals. And they went on all fours, except at grand balls and parties, when they walked on their hind legs, lest they should be mistaken for the servants; and the working people were all kinds of useful animals, from cows to give milk, and donkeys to carry loads, down to spiders to spin lace for ladies' dresses; and



A WORKING WOMAN SPINNING.

they always went on all fours, or on as many legs as they happened to have. But, whatever his form might be, everyone was quite contented to be just what he was, and nobody ever wanted to be bigger or stronger, or more handsome or more clever than nature had made him.

Now one of the oddest things in the CLUCK-CLUCK time was that people could not quarrel, for in those days tempers had not been invented, and pride and anger were as much unknown as envy or deceit. So the powerful and the strong never ill-used or bullied the humble and the weak, and all classes lived together in love and peace.

You might have seen a bull-cat eating out of the same dish with a mouse, or a lamb dancing with a wolf, or a goose wheeling a baby pig in a perambulator, or a terrier kitten taking a walk with a tom-pug; and the bull-cat did not want to eat the mouse, and the lamb did not want to worry the wolf, and the goose did not want to eat the pig, and the kitten did not want to fight with the pug. As there were

no policemen in those days, of course there could be no thieves, and as there was no money nobody could be poor, and as there were no doctors nobody could be sick; and altogether there never were, since the world began, any people so happy as those of the land of GRIG and FLICK in the CLUCK-CLUCK time.

And yet there was one thing that made the people of GRIG grumble sometimes, and that was that the King and the royal family, though they had very handsome faces, and as graceful figures as any monkey could wish for, had no tails. Now I cannot tell you how that happened, because I don't know, and nobody ever did know for certain, but there had once been two very wise men in GRIGLAND, one of whom was a Bangaroo of the name of *Stumpf*, and the other a Stuffalo of the name of *Schwanz*, and *Stumpf* wrote a very big book, to show that the first King of GRIG had been born without a tail because all the common people had tails, and a king ought to be different from everybody else; and *Schwanz* wrote a great many books to show that the first King of GRIG



GOOSE-NURSE, PIG-BABY, AND GIRAFFE-GUARD.

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had been bórñ with a very long tail, but that he had one day gone up to the top of the mountain to see what was on the other side, when his tail had been bitten off by one of the ferocious Salligaiters that live in the FLICK country, and that it had never grown again on him or any of his descendants.

Now one half of the people believed *Stumpf*, and the other half believed *Schwanz*, and for many years the *Stumpfers* and the *Schwanzers*, as they called themselves, would not play with one another; and at last they were so near quarrelling that the King made a law that nobody should ever speak about monkeys' tails on pain of eating a whole stick of barley-sugar. But they could not help thinking about it, you know, for all that; and this was the only thing that ever made the people of GRIG grumble sometimes.

Now the people of FLICK also had their vexation. Their kings, it is true, were not without tails,—on the contrary, there are no monkeys, not even in the Zoological Gardens, with such beautiful, long, bushy, and curly tails as the King and the Royal Family of

FLICK carried ;—but what do you think they had not got? Why, there had never been, since the world began, a king, or queen, or prince, or princess in the land of FLICK with any hair on their heads !

Now I cannot tell you how that happened, because I don't know, and nobody ever did know for certain ; but there had once been two very wise men in FLICK-LAND, one of whom was a Sparrowkeet named *Draeb-eulb*, and the other a Cockathree named *Bmuhtmot* ; and *Draeb-eulb* wrote a very big book to show that the first king of FLICK had been born without any hair on his head because all the common people had hair on their heads, and kings ought to be different from everybody else. But *Bmuhtmot* wrote a much bigger book to show that the first king of FLICK had been born with a beautiful head of hair, but that he had one day gone up to the top of the mountain to see what was on the other side, when all his hair was pulled out by the roots by one of the voracious Crocoducks which live in the land of GRIG, and that it had never grown again on him or any of his descendants.



A LADY OF FLICKLAND.

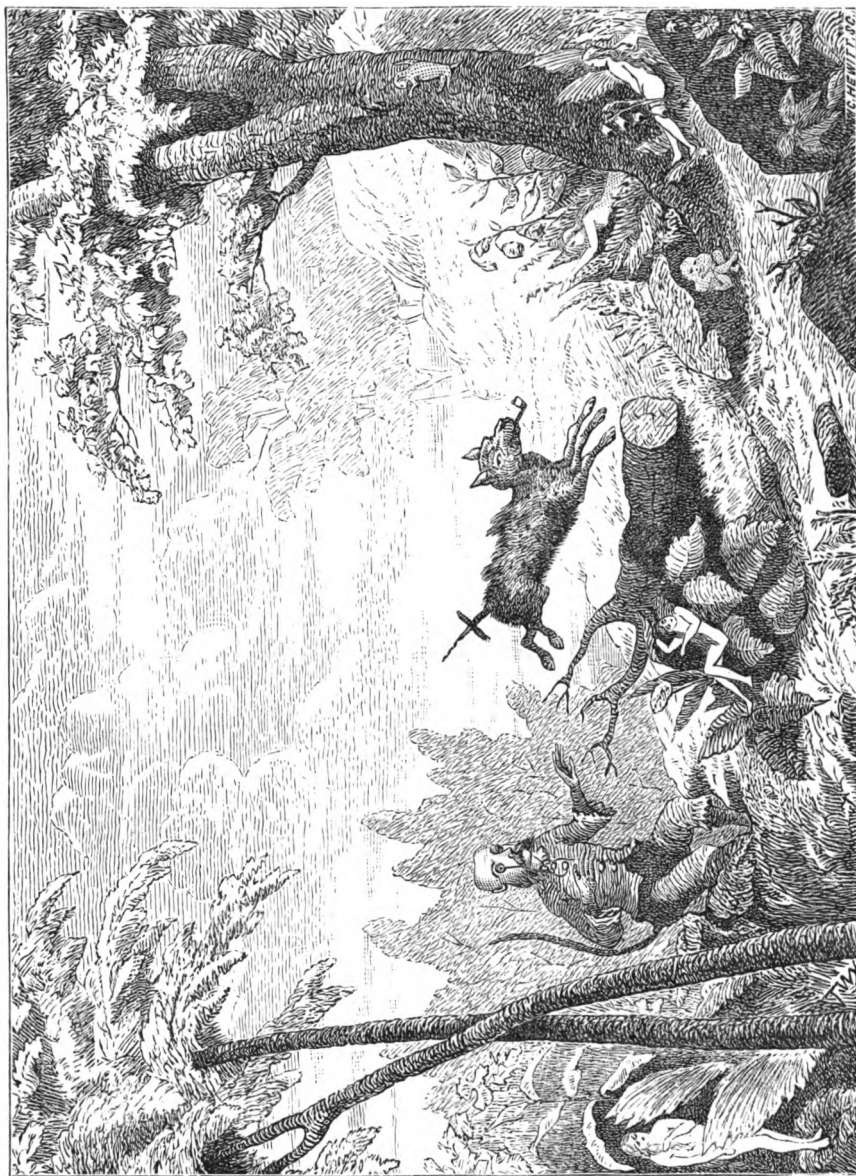
Now one half of the people of FLICK believed *Bmuhtmot*, and the other half believed *Draebeulb*; and those who believed *Bmuhtmot* would not dance with those who believed *Draebeulb*, and they were so nearly quarrelling about it that the King made a law that nobody should ever speak of a bald head under pain of taking a dose of gingerbeer. But they could not help thinking about it, you know, and this was the only thing that ever made the people of FLICK grumble sometimes.

And now I am going to tell you what happened one beautiful CLUCK-CLUCK morning. The eldest son of the King of FLICK, whose name was Prince *Ba-Booni*, was hunting the Smoo in the forest just under the high mountain that stands between FLICK and GRIG.

What is the Smoo, you ask? Well, the Smoo is a very pretty little quintipede (which means it has five-and-twenty toes), and though it was common enough in the Cluck-Cluck time it is never found in these days. There is a vulgar little animal now that pre-

tends to be a Smoo, and that inhabits the treeless forests of the Australian deserts, where it lives on the top of telegraph posts, a very lazy little beast, that consumes its own smoke to save itself the trouble of looking for food; but the real Smoo of FLICKLAND was a much nicer animal, and lived entirely upon stuffed canary-birds, which it caught by means of a fishing-rod baited with live pineapples.

It built its nest in the sea, and poached its own eggs. In colour the Smoo was white all over, except that it was covered with green spots and pink streaks, and had a scarlet head and French-blue legs, all but the fifth leg, which was of no colour. It had a black tail with a magnetic corkscrew attached to it, and when pursued by other animals it drew them with this weapon like so many corks; and that is why it was called the Smoo. Its flesh was considered a great delicacy, and was in flavour something between currant jelly and horse-radish, but as there was a law forbidding anybody to hurt the Smoo it had to be swallowed alive and let go next morning. In FLICKLAND, however, no



PRINCE BA-BOONI HUNTING THE SMOO.

one except the royal family was allowed to hunt the Smoo, because it was supposed that it took great pleasure in being hunted by princes, and enjoyed the sport even more than they did themselves.

Now I don't know whether the Smoo really liked being hunted, for I never asked him, but I do know that he did not at all like to be caught and swallowed alive; so when Prince *Ba-Booni* was following him the Smoo ran up the hill-side as fast as he could; but the more the Smoo ran up the hill the more the Prince ran after him, and, of course, as the Smoo had five legs to carry and the Prince had only two (for, as I told you, the royal family walked on their hind-legs), the poor Smoo had not much chance, and when he got to the top of the hill he lay down and was just going to be caught when *Ba-Booni* saw—What do you think he saw?

At the very time that Prince *Ba-Booni* was hunting the Smoo in the forest, the eldest daughter of the King of GRIG, the Princess *Munk-Eyna*, went to gather flowers in the palace garden, which lay at the foot of

the mountain between GRIG and FLICK. Now gathering flowers in GRIGLAND was not so easy as you may think, because, as you know, they had not only wings but voices, and as soon as the Princess would put out her hand to pluck a flower, it would fly up into the air and sing a little song to warn the others that danger was near. So, although the Princess *Munk-Eyna* had been wandering among the flowers for two hours, she had not been able to pluck a single one, and was beginning to despair of ever getting her bouquet when she saw a Whimbrel fast asleep in its bed. What is a Whimbrel, you ask? Well, the CLUCK-CLUCK Whimbrel was rather peculiar, quite unlike anything that grows in our gardens; for though there are some stuck-up flowers now who pretend to be Whimbrels, they are nothing of the sort really. The Whimbrel of GRIGLAND was a bright golden flower of a pea-blue shade, in shape like a very tame robin-redbreast, but much longer and quite different; its smell was something between Eau-de-Cologne and hashed mutton, and the wings were made of barley-sugar, and before



PRINCESS MUNK-EVNA CHASING THE WHIMBREL.

it went to sleep at night it turned itself inside out, so as to make itself into an umbrella to keep off the dew, and that is why it was called the Whimbrel.

Well, then, no sooner did the Princess see the Whimbrel asleep, than she approached on tip-toe very carefully, and was just putting out her hand to pluck it when a young melted-buttercup, floating past in the air, uttered a loud note of alarm. The Whimbrel woke and flew away, but the faster it flew the faster *Munk-Eyna* ran after it, so the Whimbrel went up the side of the hill and *Munk-Eyna*, panting and breathless, followed it; but of course it is easier to run up a hill on two legs than to fly up a hill upon wings, so the poor Whimbrel had no chance, and when it got to the top of the hill it lay down and was just going to be caught when the Princess saw—what do you think she saw?

Why, she saw a beautiful young Prince, with the loveliest yellow whiskers and the most curly tail she had ever beheld in her life; but while she stood staring at him she was rather shocked to notice that he was

perfectly bald. Now she had seen bald people in her own country, but then they were always very clever men of the middle class, whose hair had fallen off from hard thinking, and for them it did not so much matter ; but it was very sad to see a handsome young Prince with a curly tail and bright yellow whiskers without any hair on his head, wasn't it? And the Prince saw a beautiful young Princess, with the brightest eyes and the sweetest smile and the rosiest cheeks he had ever looked upon ; her figure was quite perfect too, but he was dreadfully shocked to see that she had no tail. Now he had seen women in his own country without tails, but then they were always very industrious women of the working class, whose tails had been worn out by sitting on them, and for them it did not so much matter ; but it was very sad to see a beautiful young Princess with lovely blue eyes and golden hair without any tail at all, wasn't it?

But there they stood staring at one another, and they were too frightened, or they would have run away. At last *Ba-Booni*, who was very polite, as all

Princes ought to be, whisked his tail in the air three times, which was the way that the gentlemen of FLICK had of making a bow. *Munk-Eyna*, who had been very carefully brought up, and had very nice manners, thereupon jumped up in the air sideways, which was the way that the ladies of GRIG had of making a curtsy; and then *Ba-Booni*, not knowing exactly what else he could say, remarked that "it was a very fine day," which, considering that the weather was always fine in the CLUCK-CLUCK time, was rather silly of him, at least it would have been silly if *Munk-Eyna* had understood what he said; but she did not understand him because, you see, she only knew her own language, which was blue, whereas the language of the FLICK people was red. However, she thought she ought to answer, so she said, in blue, that "she was pretty well, thank you." *Ba-Booni* had never heard any one talk blue before, and was very much surprised at such words, of which he could make no meaning, but he thought he ought to say something more, so he inquired of *Munk-Eyna*, in red, "How her dear mamma

was," to which *Munk-Eyna* answered, in blue, that "upon the whole she preferred marmalade to music lessons."

Now, if you were to meet a little Timbuctoo girl or a little Timbuctoo boy who did not know one word of English, and if you did not know one word of Timbuctoo, you could not talk to one another, could you? or if you did you would not understand one another; but everything was quite different in the CLUCK-CLUCK time, and so, although *Ba-Booni* spoke red and *Munk-Eyna* spoke blue, they had not been talking more than five minutes before the two colours got mixed up into one beautiful violet colour, and then, of course, they both understood it, and chatted away just as if they had known one another all their lives. And *Ba-Booni* forgot all about the Smoo, who ran down the hill laughing, and when he got home told his wife how he had been to the top of the mountain and had seen a beautiful princess without a tail. And *Munk-Eyna* forgot all about the Whimbrel, which flew down the hill singing, and when it got home told her

husband how she had been to the top of the mountain and had seen a beautiful young prince with a bald head.

In the meantime *Ba-Booni* and *Munk-Eyna* sat side by side, and told one another their names, and how old they were, and all about their mammas and papas, and brothers and sisters. And so they talked on for hours, and the sun struck two (for in those days there were no clocks, but only the sun which struck the hours), and though that was their dinner-time they did not feel hungry. And they talked on, and the sun struck six, and that was their tea-time, but they did not feel thirsty. And they still talked on, and the sun struck nine, before he went to rest in the blue sea a long way off, and that was their bed-time, but they did not feel sleepy; and it was not till the moon got up that they remembered that they were a long way from home and had better return. So they said good-bye ever so many times over and over again, and before they parted *Munk-Eyna* promised *Ba-Booni* that she would come back next day to the same place, and have another long chat. Just as they were going down the

hill, the one on one side, and the other on the other side, *Munk-Eyna* turned round to take a last look at *Ba-Booni*, and what do you think? At that very moment *Ba-Booni* had turned round to take a last look at *Munk-Eyna*, and their eyes met and they both felt dreadfully ashamed, and ran down the hill so fast that they woke up the daisies that were sleeping in the grass, and the poor things raised their drowsy heads, and opened their eyes (for the flowers had eyes then, and that is why we make nosegays of them to this day), wondering who was making all that disturbance in the middle of the night, but when they saw that it was only *Ba-Booni* and *Munk-Eyna* they went to sleep again.

When Prince *Ba-Booni* got to the foot of the hill he sat down to rest, and as he sat he sang a song, and the moment he raised his voice the flowers woke up, and sang an accompaniment; and when the birds heard it they took up their instruments and joined in, and the nightingales played the harmonium, and the cuckoos played the flute, and the woodpeckers played

the drum, and the bullfinches played the horn, and the tomtits played the trombone, and the blackbirds played the banjo ; and when the beasts heard it, the bulls began to roar, and the cows began to moo, and the sheep began to bleat, and the pigs began to squeak, and the dogs began to bark, and the cats began to mew, and then the grasshoppers began to chirp, and the frogs beat time with their croaking, and the wind whistled merrily, but they were all perfectly in tune, because you know in the CLUCK-CLUCK time false notes had not been invented, and though there were so many musicians the voice of *Ba-Booni* rose sweet and clear above all other sounds, and was heard by *Munk-Eyna* as she stood listening with a beating heart at the foot of the hill on the other side. And this is what *Ba-Booni* sang :

Lovely Munk-Eyna,
Fair as a pearl,
Never was seen a
More beautiful girl !
To love you and cherish
I never shall fail,

Cluck-Cluck.

But say, sweet Munk-Eyna,
Why have you no tail ?

*Red chorus of mad bulls and grasshoppers, to an accompaniment of
chocolate drops.*

Lovely Munk-Eyna,
Fair as a pearl,
Never was seen a
More beautiful girl !

When the song was finished, *Munk-Eyna* thought that she ought to sing an answer, and no sooner did she raise her voice than all the flowers, and the birds, and the beasts, and the frogs, and the grasshoppers, and the waters, and the winds, throughout the whole of GRIGLAND joined in, but in a much softer voice, and this is what the Prince heard as he stood with a beating heart at the foot of the hill on the other side :

Gentle Ba-Booni,
Hunting the Smoo,
So young and so spoony,
How do you do ?
With love and affection
My heart is enthralled,
But say, dear Ba-Booni,
Say why are you bald ?

Blue chorus of doves and ladybirds, to an accompaniment of mince pies.

Gentle Ba-Booni,
Hunting the smoo,
So young and so spoony,
How do you do ?

As the last notes melted away in the distance, *Ba-Booni* and *Munk-Eyna* suddenly remembered how late it was, and instead of walking home in a slow and dignified manner as became their rank, they each ran home as fast as ever he or she could on all fours and got into bed as quickly as possible. Fortunately the people in the town were fast asleep, so nobody saw them.

And that night *Munk-Eyna* had such a funny dream. She dreamt that the King of FLICK had invited her to a ball in his palace, and that she was waltzing a quadrille with Prince *Ba-Booni*, and that as soon as they began to dance his hair began to grow, and that the longer they danced the longer his hair grew, and so she thought that if she could only keep on dancing he would never be bald any more. And she danced, and danced, and danced, till his

hair was so long that it trailed on the ground, and her feet got entangled in it, and she fell on the floor, and then she woke.

And that night Prince *Ba-Booni* had such a funny dream. He dreamt that he was with *Munk-Eyna* in the palace of the King of GRIG, and that he was dancing a duet with her, and when he began to dance her tail began to grow, and the longer they danced the longer her tail grew, and so he thought if he could only keep on dancing long enough she would never be without a tail any more; and they danced, and danced, and danced, till her tail reached the ground and he tripped over it and fell, and then he woke.

Now when Prince *Ba-Booni* came down to breakfast next morning, and told the King and the Queen that he had been to the top of the mountain, where he had met a beautiful Princess with long golden hair, but without an atom of tail, they were very much shocked, because in FLICKLAND it was considered very wicked to tell stories even in fun, and of course nobody could believe that there were any princesses in the

world except the Princesses of Flick, or that it was possible for a princess to live even for one hour without a tail. So the King told *Ba-Booni* that he was very naughty to talk such nonsense, and that if he ever did it again he would give him a big jam tart to learn by heart, and never let him leave off till he had eaten up every bit of it, and the King also forbade him ever to go to the top of the mountain again. And when *Munk-Eyna* came down to breakfast next morning, and told the King and Queen that she had been to the top of the mountain, and had met a beautiful Prince with a long curly tail, but without an atom of hair on his head, they were very much shocked, because in GRIGLAND it was considered very wicked to tell stories even in fun, and of course nobody could believe that there were any princes in the world except the Princes of GRIG, or that any prince could live even for an hour without hair on his head. So the Queen told *Munk-Eyna* that she was very naughty to talk such nonsense, and that if she ever did it again, she would set her to

do a long sum of strawberries and cream, and never let her leave off till she had eaten them all up, and the Queen forbade her ever to go to the top of the mountain again.

Now *Munk-Eyna* and *Ba-Booni* were both very unhappy to think that they would not meet again, and they would have cried dreadfully, only, as I told you before, tears had not been invented in the CLUCK-CLUCK time, and people had not learnt how to cry without tears, much less to shed tears without crying. But they worried themselves all the same ; so much so, that they at last grew quite fat and rosy, and *Munk-Eyna's* eyes grew blue, and *Ba-Booni's* cheeks grew red with fretting, and their papas and mammas became very uneasy about them, and tried to console them, but all *Munk-Eyna* would say was, Oh ! *Ba-Booni*, and all that *Ba-Booni* would say was, Oh ! *Munk-Eyna*, and then they would burst out laughing from grief, and want so many helps of pudding at dinner, that the cooks nearly gave warning.

So the King and Queen of GRIG and FLICK became

very much alarmed about their children, and they sent for their Prime Ministers to consult them as to what they had better do.

Now the Prime Minister of the King of GRIG was a Rhinopotomus, of the name of *Nimajneb*, which in the blue language means one who looks more wise than anybody ever was, and I want you to take an interest in him, because our family is said to be descended from the Rhinopotomuses, and that is how I came by the name; for the Rhino gradually disappeared, and then, in the course of very many years Potomus was shortened into Potmouse, and *Nimajneb de Potmouse* was one of the warriors who came over to England with William the Conqueror, and he was your grandpapa's great-great-grand-ancestor.

Well, no sooner did the Prime Minister look at *Munk-Eyna*, than she began to sing in violet :

Smoo ! Smoo ! Beautiful Smoo,
Carry my love to my dear Ba-Booni !

Now *Nimajneb* was a very clever man indeed, or else he would not have been made Prime Minister,

and if he had once confessed that he was not as wise as he looked, the King would have dismissed him from his place, so when he heard *Munk-Eyna* sing a song in violet, though he did not know the least bit in the world what she meant by it, he looked very knowing indeed, shook his head two or three times, felt her pulse, and told the King that she was suffering from a complaint called EVOLNI, produced by her having been bewitched by one of the mischievous fairies who lived at the top of the mountain, and that they must go at once, with ten of the strongest wolves in the whole army, to catch her and shut her up in a blue-pill box until she unbewitched *Munk-Eyna*. So they all set off next morning, and *Munk-Eyna* went with them to show them the way.

And at the same time the King of FLICK had sent for his Prime Minister, who was a Rosynoceros called *Mailliw*, which in the red language means one who knows everything and can do everything at once, and I want you to take an interest in *Mailliw*, because his family was connected by marriage with the Rhino-



PRINCE BA-BOONI SUFFERING FROM YNOOPS.

potomuses and therefore the Rosynoceroses are also ancestors of yours ; but the noceros in course of time was gradually worn out and disappeared a great many years ago, so that nothing was left but the Rosy, which has descended to your cheeks.

Well, no sooner did the FLICK Prime Minister look at *Babooni* than the Prince began to sing in violet—

“ Pretty little Whimbrel star,
Oft I wonder how you are !”

Now *Mailliw* was also a very clever man indeed, or else he would not have been Prime Minister, and if he had confessed that there was anything he did not understand or could not do the King would have cut his head off; so when he heard Prince *Ba-Booni* sing in violet, though he did not know the least bit in the world what he meant by it, he did not look at all surprised, but stared at him very hard for two whole minutes, and then told the King that the poor Prince was suffering from a complaint called SSENYNNOOPS, produced by his having been bewitched by one of the imps who lived on the top of the moun-

tain, and that they must go there at once with ten of the most cunning foxes amongst all their lawyers to catch him and shut him up in a mare's nest until he unbewitched *Ba-Booni*; and so they all set off next morning, and *Ba-Booni* went with them to show them the way.

And so it happened that just as the King of FLICK and his people had got up to the top of the mountain on one side, the King of GRIG and his people had got up on the other side, and there they stood staring at one another with all their might; but *Munk-Eyna* and *Ba-Booni* no sooner saw each other than they rushed forward and shook hands and began talking in violet, which neither the FLICKS nor the GRIGS could understand one word of.

Now the King of GRIG was of course very much surprised, and he wondered who the royal monkey could be who was standing there without any hair on his head, because, although he wore his crown, you could easily see that he was quite bald. And the King of FLICK was equally surprised, and he wondered



THE MEETING OF THE KINGS OF GRIGLAND AND FLICKLAND.

who the royal monkey could be who was standing there without a tail; for though he wore his robes of state you could easily see that he had not got a tail under them, but they were both too polite to say what they thought. So after a little time the King of GRIG said in blue, "Why is a speckled pig like a perambulator?" to which the King of FLICK replied in red, "Because the mouse ran up the clock." And after that the colours became mixed, and they talked away in violet as if they had known one another all their lives; and the GRIG nobles made friends with the FLICK nobles, and the ten wolves played a game of leap-frog with the ten foxes, and *Munk-Eyna* and *Ba-Booni* walked about hand in hand, and everybody was quite happy except the two Prime Ministers, who said that they had never heard of such extraordinary proceedings. And *Nimajneb* declared that the people of FLICK were impostors, and that he did not think much of a king without any hair on his head. And *Mailliw* said that the people of GRIG were stupid, and that he did not think much of a

king without a tail to his back. But the two Kings told their Prime Ministers to hold their tongues and make friends, which they did by biting one another's tails, which was a way prime ministers had in the CLUCK-CLUCK time of concluding peace. And the King of GRIG invited the King of FLICK to come and dine with him in his own country, and to bring his family and his court with him; and the King of FLICK said, "Yes, he should be very happy to come." Now when *Nimajneb* heard this he cried out in blue, "*Didduever!*" And then the King of FLICK invited the King of GRIG to come and dine with him in his country, and to bring *his* family and *his* court with him; and the King of GRIG said, "Yes, he would be very happy to come." Now when *Mailliw* heard this he cried out in red, "*Wellinever!*" but nobody minded what the two Prime Ministers said. And when they saw that, they sat down under a dicky-tree and played a game of dominoes with cocoa-nuts. And then the two Kings bid one another good-bye, and so did the two Prime Ministers, and so did the ten wolves and

the ten foxes; but *Munk-Eyna* and *Ba-Booni* said good-bye not once, but a hundred times, and before they parted they sang a song to one another, and this was what they sang:—

BA-BOONI'S SONG.

What shall I say to you,
What shall I do?
Sing to you? Play to you?
Tooty, too, too!

Sit up and beg to you?
Stand on one leg to you?
Offer an egg to you?
What shall I do?

MUNK-EYNA'S SONG.

What shall I do to you?
What shall I say?
Bill to you, coo to you,
Tease you all day?

Bark to you, mew to you?
Say how do you do to you?
Talk of the Smoo to you?
What shall I say?

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On the very next Monday, the King of GRIG gave a grand ball to the King of FLICK and all his family, and no sooner did *Munk-Eyna* begin to dance with *Ba-Booni* than, to the surprise of the whole court, *Ba-Booni's* hair began to grow, and before the evening was over, he had the most beautiful curly black hair that you ever saw, and then *Munk-Eyna* knew that her dream had come true.

And the next day the King of FLICK gave a grand ball to the King of GRIG and all his family, and no sooner did *Ba-Booni* begin to dance with *Munk-Eyna* than, to the surprise of the whole court, her tail began to grow, and before the evening was over she had the most beautiful, soft, bushy tail that you ever saw, and then he knew that his dream had come true.

And after that the two Kings arranged a marriage between *Ba-Booni* and *Munk-Eyna*, and everybody was glad, except the two Prime Ministers, for *Nimaj-neb* declared that there was an old GRIG song, so old that nobody could sing it any more, which foretold great misfortunes if ever a Princess of GRIG should

wear a tail at a wedding. And *Mailliw* declared that there was an old FLICK story, so old that nobody could tell it any more, which foretold that a great misfortune would happen if ever a Prince of FLICK should wear a curly head at a wedding. But nobody minded what the Prime Ministers said, and so *Ba-Booni* married *Munk-Eyna*, and on the same day *Nimajneb's* son married *Mailliw's* daughter, and the nephew of *Bmuhtmot* married the niece of *Draebeulb*, and the uncle of *Stumpff* married the aunt of *Schwanz*, and the sister of the Smoo married the brother of the Whimbrel, and never since the world began was there such merrymaking as at all these weddings, not only because the brides and bridegrooms were so happy, but because it made the people of GRIG and the people of FLICK the very best of friends and neighbours. At first they found visiting one another rather difficult, because of the big hill between them, but when people were determined to do a good work in the CLUCK-CLUCK time they always found means to do it, and one day a mole of GRIGLAND, called *Nosnehpets*, and

a beaver of FLICKLAND, called *Pessel*, agreed that they might make a road right through and under the mountain, and though the two Prime Ministers declared that if such a thing were done, the two countries would immediately be blown into the air, the two Kings allowed it to be tried, and the consequence was that the GRIGLANDERS and the FLICKLANDERS became just like one large family, and instead of the one speaking red, and the other speaking blue, violet became the language of both countries.

But a year afterwards something happened that caused great surprise in both lands. *Ba-Booni's* wife, and the wives of all the others who married at the same time, had little babies brought to them, but instead of having four legs, or six legs, none of these babies had more than two, and from that time the children of the Royal Family, instead of being monies, and the nobles, instead of being lions and tigers, and the gentry, instead of being horses and dogs, and the working-people, instead of being donkeys and spiders, grew up into nothing better than men and

women, just as they are now, which, of course, was a great disappointment and grief to the two Prime Ministers. But worse than that: when the autumn was over, and the fruit and the grain had been gathered in, instead of the trees beginning to blossom again all their leaves fell off; and the waters in the rivers and the fountains turned into ice; and the green fields and bright gardens were covered with snow; and the poor flowers caught such bad colds that they quite lost their voices, and have never been able to sing since; and a harsh cold wind came and blew away their wings, and they have never grown again; and then *Nimajneb* and *Mailliw* went about rubbing their tails and saying, "Ah! did we not tell you what would happen if *Ba-Booni* married *Munk-Eyna*?"

But more wonderful things than that came to pass soon, for when the Prince and Princess grew to be five-and-twenty years old they made all the usual arrangements for growing smaller every year till they should be little babies again, and *Ba-Booni* turned up the end of his trousers, and *Munk-Eyna* took up a

tuck in her dress, and all the other people in GRIGLAND and FLICKLAND who were five-and-twenty years old did the same ; but a whole year passed, and none of them grew a bit smaller ; and ten years passed, and still they did not grow smaller, and instead of growing younger they gradually grew older, and instead of growing more beautiful they began to grow more ugly, and everybody was horribly frightened at this extraordinary state of things, except *Nimajneb* and *Mailliw*, who went about rubbing their tails harder than ever, and saying, "There ! did not we tell you so ? If you had listened to us this would not have happened !" But worse was yet to come. One morning when *Munk-Eyna* got up, and was combing her hair before the glass, she was very much shocked to see a line on her forehead, and in great alarm she sent for *Nimajneb*, and asked him to rub it out, and he got a piece of india-rubber, and rubbed for a long time, but he could not rub it out ; so he went and consulted the Council of State, called the "Sreep," and they found that the mark was the

first symptom of a complaint, which had long been foretold, called *Selknirw*, which would never disappear, but grow stronger day by day; and then he knew that the beautiful Princess was beginning to grow into an old woman.

And the same morning when *Ba-Booni* got up, and was brushing his whiskers before the glass, he was very much shocked to see three gray hairs on his head, and in great alarm he sent for *Mailliw*, and asked him to pull them out, and he got a pair of pincers and pulled and pulled, but the more *Mailliw* pulled out the gray hairs, the more other gray hairs grew in their place; and so he went and consulted the Council of State, called the "Snommoc," and they discovered that gray hairs were the first symptom of a complaint, which had long been foretold, called *Gnuoy regnolon*, and then he knew that the beautiful young Prince was growing into an old man. Both *Ba-Booni* and *Munk-Eyna* were very sorrowful, but neither of them liked to tell the other what he or she had discovered, and that was the first time that there was a secret between

them. And *Munk-Eyna* got up very early next morning, and went into the meadow, called Rodylak-sdnalwor, where the mushrooms grew, and she gathered a puff-ball, and with it she powdered the line on her forehead so that *Ba-Booni* might not see it, and hate her for it; but the wrinkle was there all the same. And *Ba-Booni* got up very early next morning, and went into the forest of Rerotser-riah-snalla, where the blackberries grew, and he squeezed the juice of the berries upon his gray hairs so that *Munk-Eyna* might not see them, and hate him for it; but the gray hairs remained there all the same. And days, and weeks, and years passed over, and more lines came in the face of *Munk-Eyna*, and more gray hairs came on the head of *Ba-Booni*; and at last *Munk-Eyna's* face, which was once as soft and smooth as a peach, became quite wrinkled and shrivelled like a winter-apple, and the hair of *Ba-Booni*, which was once so black and curly, was quite gray, and dried up like a leaf before it falls from the tree in autumn. And the nobles, and the gentry, and the working-people also grew gray, wrinkled, and ugly.

In a few years more *Ba-Booni* began to complain that his legs were weak, and he was obliged to walk with a stick; and about the same time *Munk-Eyna* complained that her eyes were getting weak, and she was unable to read without spectacles. They were still very fond of one another, but they could not help seeing that they were much changed, and sometimes when *Ba-Booni* looked at the withered, careworn face of poor *Munk-Eyna*, he would wonder if that could really be the beautiful young Princess whom he had seen chasing the Whimbrel on the hill-side that bright summer's day long ago? And when *Munk-Eyna* looked at the bent form and tottering steps of poor *Ba-Booni*, she would wonder if he could really be the beautiful Prince whom she had seen hunting the Smoo on the hill-side that bright summer's day long ago? but neither of them said what they thought for fear of giving pain to the other.

The worst of all was yet to come. One bitter winter morning, when *Munk-Eyna* awoke and spoke to *Ba-Booni*, she was shocked to see him looking

so white and pale, and when she touched his cheek it was quite cold; and when she called his name he did not answer, but slept on. And the sun struck twelve o'clock, and still he slept on, and the sun struck two o'clock, and still he slept on; and then she got dreadfully frightened, and she called the King and Queen, and they tried to awaken him, but still he slept on; so they called the two Prime Ministers, and they tried to awaken him, but he still slept on; and the sun set, and the moon rose, and still he did not wake, and when another day dawned, and he was still sleeping, they knew that he was dead.

And poor *Munk-Eyna* threw herself over him and cried and moaned, and the King and Queen were very much shocked and surprised to see tears rolling down her cheeks, and they kissed them away; but the more they kissed, the more the tears came again, and at last she gave one great sob and fell down, and when they lifted her up they found that her heart was broken in two, and then they were both carried away and buried in a flower-bed in the garden.



POOR DEARS!

Then there was great sorrow all over the land of FLICK and GRIG, and still *Nimajneb* and *Mailliw* went about rubbing their tails and saying : “ Ah, if you had only listened to us, all this would never have happened, but trust us ; we will yet set all right ! ” But in a little time they also became very old and feeble, so feeble that they could not rub their tails any more, but they would not believe that they were going to die, because, as they said, if they died, of course the whole world must come to an end, since there was nobody else wise or clever enough to be Prime Minister of GRIG and FLICK ; but they did die at last, and still the world went on just the same, and as new children were born and grew up and married, the old-fashioned people of GRIG and FLICK were gradually forgotten, and only very aged men and women, sitting in their chimney-corners, would tell their grandchildren long, prosy stories about the good old time of CLUCK-CLUCK, when everybody was young and beautiful, and there was no sorrow, or sickness, or death ; and they would shake their

heads mournfully, and say, "Ah, those were merry days indeed ! they will never come back again."

But it was only the old people who talked like that, and nobody minded them much.

I see a bright-eyed mother who is holding up her baby for papa to kiss ; and I see a blushing maiden who is watching that handsome young man while he is carving her name on an old tree in the Park ; and I see two little children, who are gathering daisies in the meadow to make a collar for their pet lamb ; and *they* certainly don't want to go back to those old times. They would not change places with the King or Queen of GRIGLAND or FLICKLAND, or with any other king or queen ; for to them, as to you, dear children, this world of to-day is more bright and beautiful than any world that ever was made before ; and to them, as to you, the present time is merrier than the best time that ever was in the olden days of CLUCK-CLUCK.

